At its March 2013 meeting, the NSHE Board of Regents received and enthusiastically accepted the report prepared by Richard N. Katz & Associates: *E-Learning and Higher Education's Iron Triangle: Opportunity, Affordability and Student Success at NSHE*. The Board directed the Chancellor to develop and proceed with a plan for the implementation of the report's recommendations. In response to that direction, I am creating an ad hoc committee charged with setting priorities, evaluating and pricing alternatives, and crafting an implementation plan per the Board's direction. This Steering Committee will report to me with a deadline of December 2014.

Given the urgency expressed by the Board and considerable time and resource commitments necessary for the implementation of the numerous recommendations in the Katz report, we need to make the distance education- related issues that support student success a systemwide priority and focus on our common goal of graduating more students. The reality of NSHE's limited resources means that the promising possibilities and benefits of adaptive learning, learning analytics, digital course materials and other areas of service and investment will need to be accomplished in phases indicative of the overall priority of the Board. The Committee report's recommendations must reflect both the challenges of our resource constraints and the need for urgent and impactful action.

While the Katz recommendations did not specifically address remediation, critical success metrics indicate good reason to focus early efforts on remediation and the corresponding transition to "gateway" courses that build upon successful remediation. Student success in mathematics is a strong indicator of a student's likelihood to persist and ultimately graduate. Remediation rates in mathematics continue to be unacceptably high, and despite the successes of the Remedial Transformation Project, more work remains to be done. We have the opportunity to build upon our faculty's successful and transformative work and the momentum they have generated by focusing the initial work of the committee on remediation. We know that student preparation for collegiate work remains a barrier to their success and progress. We know too that in order to consolidate success in remedial courses, we must ensure students ability to immediately proceed to regular credit bearing college work. Evolving technologies such as adaptive learning must play a part.

Phase 1: Remediation/Skills Modules

The Steering Committee shall consider approaches and technologies that utilize e-learning in the support of remediating students in a timely and effective fashion. The Committee shall develop an education and business model, a program plan, and budget for the implementation of on-line and e-learning remedial modules initially in Mathematics and then English. The recommended model must include appropriate student support mechanisms, including but not limited to, on-line and face-to-face tutoring and other student support strategies. Key to the success of this effort will also be plans for ease of registration by students at all NSHE institutions, in addition to their home institution. The plan developed by the Steering Committee must be complete by June 2014.

The recommended approaches for remedial education shall consider strategies for developing remedial skill modules internally, through vendor partnerships, or both. The recommended approaches must include provision for students to complete required remediation in a self-paced environment that is adaptable to each student's learning style. The measure of success for remedial education will be successful completion of the related entry level college-level course, and the Committee shall consider that transition in formulating its recommendations.

Phase 2: E-Ncore

The heart of the report's recommendations calls for the development of an e-Ncore whereby the campuses would develop and deliver e-Ncore master courses for the general education curriculum. The Committee shall develop an education and business model, a program plan, and budget for the implementation of e-Ncore on-line gateway course offerings that will be transferrable to all NSHE institutions.

Given the limited human and financial resources of the System and its institutions, it is reasonable to expect that implementation of the full general education curriculum under the e-Ncore is not feasible in the short-term. Therefore, the Committee may develop a phased implementation plan that includes a timeline for implementation across the general education curriculum. The Report should articulate a strategy or rationale for sequencing priorities within the general education curriculum.

I am expecting that wherever best from the student perspective the approaches identified by the Committee will build on the considerable excellent work already accomplished in the System. As was noted at the March Board of Regents meeting, NSHE colleges and universities have married the on ground and on campus modes of instruction in response to the changing preferences and demographics of those we serve. Our goal now is to build in ways that extend the benefits of our collective strengths to all of our students where and when they need us.

Phase 3: Other Recommendations

The Steering Committee shall evaluate and prioritize the remaining recommendations of the Katz report not otherwise addressed in Phases 1 and 2. The Committee shall recommend a timeline for implementation of the other recommendations.

Additional Committee Authority

In its development of an education and business plan, the Committee shall consider partnerships with external vendors and may seek and retain the advice and counsel of subject matter experts, internal or external to the System, as needed. In addition, the Committee may establish subcommittees with appropriate student, faculty and administrative representation to meet the provisions of this charge. Any data requested by the Committee will be provided by the System Office.